

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed April 4, 2004, has been carefully reviewed and the following remarks and forgoing amendment have been made in consequence thereof.

Subsequent to entry of the foregoing amendment, Claims 1, 3, 5-15, 18-30, 32, and 34-43, 45, and 46 will be pending in this application. Claims 1-3,5-8, 10-16, 18-21, 23-32, 34-40, 42, 43, 45, and 46 are rejected. Claims 2, 4, 16, 17, 31, 33, and 44 have been canceled. Claims 4, 9, 17, 22, 33, 41, and 44 were objected to.

The rejection of Claims 1, 2, 3, 5, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Howard et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,549,002) is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 2 and 4 have been canceled and independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the recitations of Claims 2 and 4. Accordingly, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Howard et al.

Claims 3, 5 and 11 depend directly or indirectly from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 3, 5 and 11 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that Claims 3, 5 and 11 are likewise patentable over Howard et al.

The rejection of Claims 1, 2, 3, 5, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Barrett et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,549,820) is respectfully traversed.

Claim 44 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 44 has been canceled and independent Claim 36 has been amended to include the recitations of Claim 44. Accordingly, Claim 36 is submitted to be patentable over Barrett et al.

Claims 37-40, 42, 43, 45, and 46 depend directly or indirectly from independent Claim 36. When the recitations of Claims 37-40, 42, 43, 45, and 46 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 36, Applicants submit that Claims 37-40, 42, 43, 45, and 46 are likewise patentable over Barrett et al.

The rejection of Claims 6, 8, 10, 12-14, 16, 18-21, 23-27, 29-32, 34, and 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Howard et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,549,002) in view of Barrett et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,549,820) is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 2 and 4 have been canceled and independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the recitations of Claims 2 and 4. Accordingly, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al.

Claims 6, 8, and 10 depend directly or indirectly from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 6, 8, and 10 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that Claims 6 and 8 are likewise patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al.

Claim 17 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 16 and 17 have been canceled and independent Claim 12 has been amended to include the recitations of Claims 16 and 17. Accordingly, Claim 12 is submitted to be patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al.

Claims 13-14, 16, 18-21, 23, and 24 depend directly or indirectly from independent Claim 12. When the recitations of Claims 13-14, 16, 18-21, 23, and 24 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 12, Applicants submit that Claims 13-14, 16, 18-21, 23, and 24 are likewise patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al.

Claim 33 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 31 and 33 have been canceled and independent Claim 25 has been amended to include the recitations of Claims 31 and 33. Accordingly, Claim 25 is submitted to be patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al.

Claims 26, 27, 29-32, 34, and 35 depend directly or indirectly from independent Claim 25. When the recitations of Claims 26, 27, 29-32, 34, and 35 are considered in

combination with the recitations of Claim 25, Applicants submit that Claims 26, 27, 29-32, 34, and 35 are likewise patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 6, 8, 10, 12-14, 16, 18-21, 23-27, 29-32, 34, and 35 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 7, 15, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Howard et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,549,002) in view of Barrett et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,549,820) and further in view of Dwyer (U.S. Pat. No. 6,279,397) is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 2 and 4 have been canceled and independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the recitations of Claims 2 and 4. Accordingly, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al and further in view of Dwyer.

Claim 7 depends directly from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claim 7 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that Claim 7 is likewise patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al and further in view of Dwyer.

Claim 17 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 16 and 17 have been canceled and independent Claim 12 has been amended to include the recitations of Claims 16 and 17. Accordingly, Claim 12 is submitted to be patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al and further in view of Dwyer.

Claim 15 depends directly from independent Claim 12. When the recitations of Claims 15 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 12, Applicants submit that Claim 15 are likewise patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al and further in view of Dwyer.

Claim 33 was indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 31 and 33 have been canceled and independent Claim 25 has been amended to include the recitations of

Claims 31 and 33. Accordingly, Claim 25 is submitted to be patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al and further in view of Dwyer.

Claim 28 depends directly from independent Claim 25. When the recitations of Claim 28 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 25, Applicants submit that Claim 28 is likewise patentable over Howard et al. in view of Barrett et al and further in view of Dwyer.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 7, 15, and 28 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,



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